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Eastern District of California

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MEXICAN NATIONALS SENTENCED TO 11 YEARS FOR DRUG AND FIREARMS OFFENSES

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that United States District Judge Morrison C. England, Jr., sentenced JESUS DIAZ OLIVERA, 30, and JOSE MARIA GOMEZ ORTEGA, 38, both originally from Michoacan, Mexico, to 11 years in prison, 60 months supervised release, and \$300 in special penalty assessments based on their conviction for possession of firearms in furtherance of drug trafficking crimes and two convictions for unlawful use of a communication facility to facilitate a felony drug offense.

This case is the product of an investigation by the Tehama County Sheriff's Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Samuel Wong, who prosecuted this case, both defendants committed their offenses in connection with a large marijuana cultivation site in the Elder Creek area of Tehama County located on Bureau of Land Management land that contained over 19,500 marijuana plants. There were separate patches of marijuana plants all linked by common trails over a distance of approximately 3,000 feet. At the time of his arrest in the marijuana garden, OLIVERA was carrying a loaded .22 caliber rifle and his shoeprints matched multiple shoeprints later found in other areas of the cultivation site. Similarly, ORTEGA was carrying a loaded .22 caliber bolt action rifle when arrested and his shoeprints matched multiple shoeprints later found near the marijuana plants. Both defendants confessed to working in the marijuana garden and agreed that a cellular telephone had been used at least twice to order supplies to be brought to the garden to maintain the marijuana growing operation.

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